



Department of Transportation.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2011-0168]

Technical Report Evaluating the 1999-2003 Head Impact Upgrade of FMVSS No. 201, Upper-Interior Components

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Request for comments on technical report.

SUMMARY:

This notice announces NHTSA's publication of a Technical Report reviewing and evaluating its existing Safety Standard 201, *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*. The report's title is: *Evaluation of the 1999-2003 Head Impact Upgrade of FMVSS No. 201 – Upper-Interior Components: Effectiveness of Energy-Absorbing Materials Without Head-Protection Air Bags*.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than [insert date 120 days after publication of this notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER.]

ADDRESSES:

Report: The technical report is available on the Internet for viewing in PDF format at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811538.PDF>. You may obtain a copy of the report free of charge by sending a self-addressed mailing label to Charles J. Kahane (NVS-431), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W53-312, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Comments: You may submit comments [identified by Docket Number NHTSA-2011-0168] by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.
- Mail: Docket Management Facility, M-30, U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building, Ground Floor, Rm. W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., between 9 am and 5 pm Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

You may call Docket Management at 202-366-9826.

Instructions: For detailed instructions on submitting comments, see the Procedural Matters section of this document. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Charles J. Kahane, Chief, Evaluation Division, NVS-431, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W53-312, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-2560. E-mail: chuck.kahane@dot.gov.

For information about NHTSA's evaluations of the effectiveness of existing regulations and programs: You may see a list of published evaluation reports at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/cats/listpublications.aspx?Id=226&ShowBy=Category> and if you click on any report you will be able to view it in PDF format.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 201 – Occupant Protection in Interior Impact – was upgraded in 1995, with a 1998-2003 phase-in, to reduce occupants' risk of head injury from contact with a vehicle's upper interior, including its pillars, roof headers and side rails, and the upper roof. Initially, energy-absorbing materials alone were used to meet the standard. NHTSA statistically analyzed the effect of these materials on head injuries due to upper-interior contact in cars and light trucks in the Crashworthiness Data System of the

National Automotive Sampling System for 1995-2009 and the effect on head injuries in fatal crashes in the Fatality Analysis Reporting System – Multiple Cause of Death files for 1999-2007. FMVSS No. 201 without head-protection air bags reduces AIS 4-to-6 head injuries due to contact with upper-interior components by an estimated 24 percent (95% confidence bounds, 11 to 35%), based on the average of the analysis results for the two databases. That is equivalent to a 4.3-percent reduction of overall fatality risk (confidence bounds 2.0 to 6.2%). When all vehicles on the road meet FMVSS No. 201, it will save an estimated 1,087 to 1,329 lives per year. At a cost of \$25.52 (in 2010 dollars) over the life of a vehicle, that amounts to an annual cost, depending on new-vehicle sales, ranging from \$301 to \$424 million for certifying all new vehicles to FMVSS No. 201. It is a very cost-effective regulation, costing less than \$1 million per life saved.

NHTSA issued previous evaluation reports on FMVSS No. 201 in 2006 (72 FR 9074, Docket No. NHTSA-2007-27371, report available at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/810739.PDF>) and in 1988 (53 FR 2516, report available at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/807203.PDF>).

PROCEDURAL MATTERS:

How can I influence NHTSA's thinking on this subject?

NHTSA welcomes public review of the technical report. NHTSA will submit to the Docket a response to the comments and, if appropriate, will supplement or revise the report.

How do I prepare and submit comments?

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the Docket number of this document (NHTSA-2011-0168) in your comments.

Your primary comments must not be more than 15 pages long (49 CFR 553.21). However, you may attach additional documents to your primary comments. There is no limit on the length of the attachments.

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the Federal Register published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477) or you may visit <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Please send two paper copies of your comments to Docket Management, fax them, or use the Federal eRulemaking Portal. The mailing address is U. S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, M-30, West Building, Ground Floor, Rm. W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. The fax number is 1-202-493-2251. To use the Federal eRulemaking Portal, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

We also request, but do not require you to send a copy to Charles J. Kahane, Chief, Evaluation Division, NVS-431, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W53-312, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590 (or e-mail them to chuck.kahane@dot.gov). He can check if your comments have been received at the Docket and he can expedite their review by NHTSA.

How can I be sure that my comments were received?

If you wish Docket Management to notify you upon its receipt of your comments, enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope containing your comments. Upon receiving your comments, Docket Management will return the postcard by mail.

How do I submit confidential business information?

If you wish to submit any information under a claim of confidentiality, send three copies of your complete submission, including the information you claim to be confidential business information, to the Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. Include a cover letter supplying the information specified in our confidential business information regulation (49 CFR Part 512).

In addition, send two copies from which you have deleted the claimed confidential business information to U. S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, M-30, West Building, Ground Floor, Rm. W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590, or submit them via the Federal eRulemaking Portal.

Will the agency consider late comments?

In our response, we will consider all comments that Docket Management receives before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above under DATES. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that Docket Management receives after that date.

Please note that even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information in the Docket as it becomes available. Further, some people may submit late comments. Accordingly, we recommend that you periodically check the Docket for new material.

How can I read the comments submitted by other people?

You may read the materials placed in the docket for this document (e.g., the comments submitted in response to this document by other interested persons) at any time by going to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets. You may also read the materials at the Docket Management Facility by going to the street address given above under ADDRESSES. The Docket Management Facility is open between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

AUTHORITY: 49 U.S.C. 30111, 30168; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

James F. Simons

Director, Office of Regulatory Analysis
and Evaluation

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